

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 01319 041047Z

50

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 CU-04 NIC-01 /095 W

----- 105633

R 041006Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1098

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY ROME

COMUSTDC

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TAIPEI 1319

TDC FOR J-22

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SCUL, PINT, PFOR, TW, CH

SUBJECT: TAIWAN BROADCAST OF ANTONIONI FILM ON MAINLAND CHINA

1. SUMMARY: ALL THREE LOCAL NETWORKS FEB 22 (AND AGAIN MARCH 3) TELECAST SEVERELY EDITED BLACK AND WHITE VERSION OF ANTONIONI DOCUMENTARY "CHUNG KUO", WITH LOCAL NARRATION AND HEAVILY PROPAGANDISTIC INTRODUCTION. EFFORTS WERE MADE TO INSURE THAT AS MANY AS POSSIBLE ON TAIWAN WERE EXPOSED TO FILM AND INTEREST WAS QUITE HIGH. HEAVY-HANDED EDITING AND RATHER SHRILL PROPAGANDISTIC TONE WERE ANNOYING TO MOST POLITICALLY SOPHISTICATED OBSERVERS. GENERAL REACTION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THAT LIFE ON MAINLAND, WHILE DRAB, IS NOT GREATLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT HERE (PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS) AND CERTAINLY IS NOT THE PURGATORY USUALLY POR-

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TAIPEI 01319 041047Z

TRAYED IN ROC MEDIA. END SUMMARY.

2. FEBRUARY 22 ALL THREE LOCAL TELEVISION NETWORKS BROADCAST A SIXTY MINUTE EDITED VERSION OF THE ANTONIONI FILM, "CHUNG KUO", ALMOST ALL FOOTAGE PRESENTING POSITIVE VIEWS OF THE MAINLAND -- INCLUDING ALL EVIDENCE OF SPONTANEITY OR CHEERFULNESS -- WAS ELIMINATED. ENGLISH LANGUAGE NARRATION WAS OVERLAID WITH A MANDARIN TRANSLATION DONE BY LOCAL "EXPERTS" WHICH WAS REASONABLY ACCURATE EXCEPT FOR THE USUAL SUBSTITUTION OF STANDARD ROC TERMINOLOGY SUCH AS "COMMUNISTS BANDITS" FOR CHINESE COMMUNISTS AND OCCASIONAL SHIFTS TO ROC PROPAGANDA LINE. SEPARATE SECTIONS OF THE FILM EACH WERE INTRODUCED BY LOCAL "COMMENTATOR" GIVING BLATANTLY POLITICAL INSTRUCTIONS AS TO "CORRECT INTERPRETATION".

3. FILM WAS SHOWN IN BLACK AND WHITE ONLY, THUS EMPHASIZING DRABNESS OF LIFE FAR MORE THAN DID COLOR VERSION SEEN BY EMBASSY OFFICERS THROUGH SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH GIO. INTERSPERSED COLOR COMMERCIALS ALSO CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH MAINLAND CONDITIONS (AND APPARENTLY WERE SELECTED FOR THAT REASON) AND MOVIE WAS FOLLOWED BY A FIFTEEN MINUTE COLOR PROPAGANDA FILM ON TAIPEI, PRESENTED "IN ORDER TO RAISE THE SPIRITS" OF THE AUDIENCE, SHOWING A TAIPEI BARELY RECOGNIZABLE TO THE AVERAGE RESIDENT.

4. INTEREST IN THE FILM WAS TREMENDOUS -- SECOND ONLY TO THE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL. NIGHT SHIFT WORKERS WERE GIVEN TIME OFF, NIGHT SCHOOLS DID NOT HOLD CLASSES AND IN GENERAL EVERY EFFORT WAS MADE TO SEE THAT AS LARGE AN AUDIENCE AS POSSIBLE SAW THE FILM. FOR THOSE WHO MISSED IT, OR MISUNDERSTOOD IT, THE FILM WAS REBROADCAST MARCH 3 IN TAIWANESE. AND JUST IN CASE ANY MISS THE POINT, LOCAL STATIONS NEXT MONTH WILL BROADCAST A DOCUMENTARY PREPARED BY THE INTELLIGENCE BUREAU OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE ENTITLED "STORM OF 20 YEARS", SAID TO PROVIDE "GLIMPSES OF THE TURMOIL AND MISERY BEHIND THE BAMBOO CURTAIN".

5. FILM APPARENTLY PURCHASED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO AND UNEDITED VERSION WAS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING BY HIGH LEVEL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 TAIPEI 01319 041047Z

OFFICIALS, THOUGH FEW SAW IT. DECISION TO SHOW IT ON LOCAL TV WAS MADE ONLY AFTER PRC CRITICISM. SOME IN GOVT WANTED TO SHOW UNCUT VERSION WITH MINIMUM PROPAGANDA; THEY LOST. HOWEVER, MINISTER OF EDUCATION TSIANG YEN-SHIH, TOLD DCM HE PLANS TO SHOW UNEDITED, COLOR VERSION TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS AND LARGE NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS.

6. THIS DETERMINED EFFORT BY GOVERNMENT TO SHOW EVERYONE HERE JUST HOW MISERABLE LIFE ON THE MAINLAND IS, SEEMS TO

US TO HAVE FALLEN CONSIDERABLY SHORT OF SUCCESS. MOST OF THE POLITICALLY SOPHISTICATED TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN, INCLUDING SEVERAL IN GOVERNMENT, WERE GREATLY ANNOYED BY THE HEAVY-HANDED PROPAGANDA CONTENT AND MINATORY TONE OF THE INTRODUCTORY SECTIONS, THE OBVIOUS EDITING, AND THE OCCASIONAL BLANKING OUT OF THE ENGLISH NARRATION. RE-ACTIONS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC WERE LESS CLEAR, BUT THERE TO MANY WERE PUT OFF BY HEAVY HANDED PACKAGING. MANY COMMENTED THAT LIFE ON MAINLAND HAD NOT CHANGED MUCH IN TWENTY YEARS AND FEW APPEARED TO AGREE WITH PRESS THAT FILM DEMONSTRATES "TAIWAN IS HEAVEN, RED CHINA IS HELL".

7. GRC LIKED THE FILM FOR THE SAME REASONS THE PRC DID NOT -- IT SHOWED LITTLE "SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION" ON THE MAINLAND, INSTEAD FOCUSED ON TRADITIONAL CHINA AND ITS PEOPLE. PERHAPS IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC REACTION HERE, PRESS HAS BEGUN DOW-PLAYING THE "LIFE IS HELL ON MAINLAND" 5#3.3 -,\$ 3.0#- 8"&)-(9* \$3;3)90.3,5, NON-MECHANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE, ANTIQUATED FACTORY EQUIPMENT, ETC.

8. DIFFICULT TO SAY HOW SUCCESSFUL (IN TERMS OF GRC'S PURPOSES) THE SHOWING WAS, BUT IT IS CLEAR THE FILM EVOKED STRONG FEELINGS OF NOSTALGIA AMONG MAINLANDERS HERE. ADDITIONALLY, WE BELIEVE MANY FORMED CONCLUSION THAT LIFE FOR THE COMMON MAN IS NOT GREATLY DIFFERENT ON TAIWAN AND THE MAINLAND. THUS WHILE THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME PROPAGANDA BENEFIT FOR GRC IN NOTING PRC'S "LACK OF PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT", ADVANTAGE PERHAPS OFFSET BY FEELING THAT CHINA, AFTER ALL, REMAINS CHINA AND THAT WHILE LIFE MAY BE DRAB, IT IS HARDLY THE PURGATORY NORMALLY PORTRAYED IN ROC MEDIA.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 TAIPEI 01319 041047Z

MCAONAUGHY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC RELATIONS, MOTION PICTURES, CHUNG KUO, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TAIPEI01319
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740369/aaaacmit.tel
Line Count: 152
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <11 JUN 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TAIWAN BROADCAST OF ANTONIONI FILM ON MAINLAND CHINA
TAGS: SCUL, PINT, PFOR, TW, CH, (ANTONIONI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005